

AMENDMENTS

Amendments to the Claims:

Please replace the claims with the following listing of claims.

1. (Cancelled)
2. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim-13, wherein the partition module is further configured to assign a volume identifier to a newly formed partition as directed by a storage management policy.
3. (Currently Amended) ~~The apparatus of claim 1, further comprising~~ An apparatus for incremental data storage, the apparatus comprising:
a baseline partition containing a baseline image;
an incremental log configured to store data, the incremental log comprising at least one snapshot partition;
a partition module configured to automatically partition the incremental log into an additional snapshot partition in response to a snapshot operation; and
a storage management module configured to support storage management policies selected from the group consisting of temporal-based policies, status-based policies, and event-based policies.
4. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim-13, further comprising a compaction module configured to compact a snapshot partition.
5. (Original) The apparatus of claim 4, wherein the compaction module is further configured to conduct compaction as directed by a storage management policy.

6. (Original) The apparatus of claim 5, wherein the storage management policy is selected from the group consisting of a temporal-based policy, a status-based policy, and an event-based policy.
7. (Original) The apparatus of claim 4, wherein the compaction module is further configured to conduct in-place compaction.
8. (Original) The apparatus of claim 4, wherein the compaction module is further configured to automatically compact a snapshot partition to the baseline volume.
9. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim ~~4~~ 3, further comprising a copy module configured to copy selected log entries to ~~the~~ a tertiary volume.
10. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim ~~4~~ 3, further comprising a read module configured to retrieve the most recent data corresponding to a block address.
11. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 10, wherein the read module is further configured to retrieve the most recent data corresponding to a specified snapshot volume and block address.
12. (Cancelled)

13. (Currently Amended) ~~The interface of claim 12, further comprising~~ An interface for managing incremental data storage, the interface comprising:

a write function configured to append an entry to an incremental log;

a read function configured to retrieve a most recent log entry corresponding to a block address;

a snapshot function configured to automatically partition the incremental log into a first and a second volume; and

a policy assignment function configured to assign a policy to an incremental log.

14. (Currently Amended) The interface of claim-12 13, further comprising a read next entry function configured to retrieve a sequential entry from the incremental log.

15. (Currently Amended) The interface of claim-12 13, further comprising a compact volume function configured to compact a snapshot volume.

16. (Currently Amended) The interface of claim-12 13, further comprising a delete volume function configured to releases a snapshot volume.

17-30. (Cancelled)